Forest Service

Southwestern Region
Regional Office

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File Code: 3410 **Date:** October 20, 2009
Route To:

Subject: Gila NF 2009 Forest Insect and Disease Aerial Survey Results (blackrangerd) (glenwoodrd) (quemadord) (reserverd) (silvercityrd) (wildernessrd)

To: Forest Supervisor, Gila National Forest

During August 17 through August 20 Daniel Ryerson and Crystal Tischler, of our staff, conducted the annual insect and disease survey flights over the Gila National Forest. Crystal joined our staff in September 2008 and will be taking on the role of primary surveyor in New Mexico. This year was a period of transition as Crystal, who had previous aerial survey experience in Colorado, became familiar with New Mexico's forest types, topography, and our survey procedures. While we strive to make our surveys as consistent as possible, mapping styles vary slightly between observers.

A map and table summarizing the results of the surveys are enclosed. Copies of this letter, map, and table have been forwarded to the respective districts of your Forest. Following is a brief summary of the survey results:

> Forest insect and disease activity decreased across the Gila NF in 2009. The post-fire ponderosa pine mortality that we have been observing the past few years decreased substantially from over 32,000 acres in 2008 to 5,400 acres this year.
>
> No defoliation by western spruce budworm was detected on the Gila NF this year. The amount of aspen defoliation observed decreased from approximately 2,000 acres last year to 260 acres this year. We have continued our effort throughout the state to distinguish aspen defoliation from aspen mortality and decline. Aspen mortality was mapped on an additional 510 acres of the Gila NF. Rather than representing complete mortality, these aspen stands contain some tree mortality and may be in a state of decline.

The enclosed map and table provide additional detail. The GIS data files are available at: http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/gis/nm_data.shtml. If you have questions regarding the survey or the data, please contact either of our observers: Daniel Ryerson at (505) 842-3285, dryerson@fs.fed.us, or Crystal Tischler at (505) 842-3284, cgtischler@fs.fed.us.

/s/ Debra Allen-Reid
DEBRA ALLEN-REID
New Mexico Zone Leader, Forest Health

Enclosures

cc: Larry Cosper
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Electronic copy of letter, map, and table to: stephani.sandoval@state.nm.us

Hardcopy of letter, map and table to:
Black Range RD, Glenwood RD, Quemado RD, Reserve RD, Silver City RD, Wilderness RD